

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Subject: 41st Meeting with the Chinese in Paris, 11 February 1972

Shortly after my return from meeting that morning with the Chinese I received a further message from Washington and called the Chinese for another appointment. (This is done from a special phone and using a code name.) They set 1600 that afternoon and at that time I again returned for the second time that day to the Chinese Embassy in Neuilly.

Met at the gate by TSAO and WEI and ushered into the Red Room, a minute or two later Ambassador HUANG CHEN joined us and after appropriate chit chat he produced a lavish cake and said that it was the beginning of their New Year. We ate the cake and toasted the New Year for our peoples and our leaders with rose flower wine. All of this made me believe that they had something acrimonious to say and I was not wrong. They then produced the message which reaffirmed their position not to interfere in the Vietnamese War and repeating their support for the North Vietnamese. I made a serious effort not to show any feeling as they read it to me in English and then put it in my pocket (without, I hope, any change in expression) and said that I would transmit it to Dr. Kissinger at once. As soon as this was done we discussed Chinese Calligraphy. I drew several characters. They criticized them and showed me how to write them correctly. The Ambassador, trying to be very nice, said that I had obvious aptitude and it would not take me more than three years (!!!) to learn Chinese. All of them were obviously a little embarrassed by the harshness of the tone of the note they had handed me.

I then gave them our message regarding further easing of trade restrictions and our views on the Indian Subcontinent. These they accepted without comment.

TSAO asked, as Press Attaché, if I knew the names of the newspapermen who were going with the President's Party. I said that I did not. He commented that though the numbers might seem small to us they were unprecedented as far as the Chinese were concerned. They had never handled anything like this number before. They asked me whether I was going with the President and I said that I did not believe so or I would have heard by now. The Ambassador said that he hoped

that at some other time I would have the opportunity to go to his country. The Ambassador asked whether I thought President Nixon would be reelected and I said that I was sure he would. The Ambassador said he thought so too as the American people approved of his opening a dialogue with China. I replied, "That and many other things too." He nodded agreement. After further cordial chit chat and much tea I left.



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